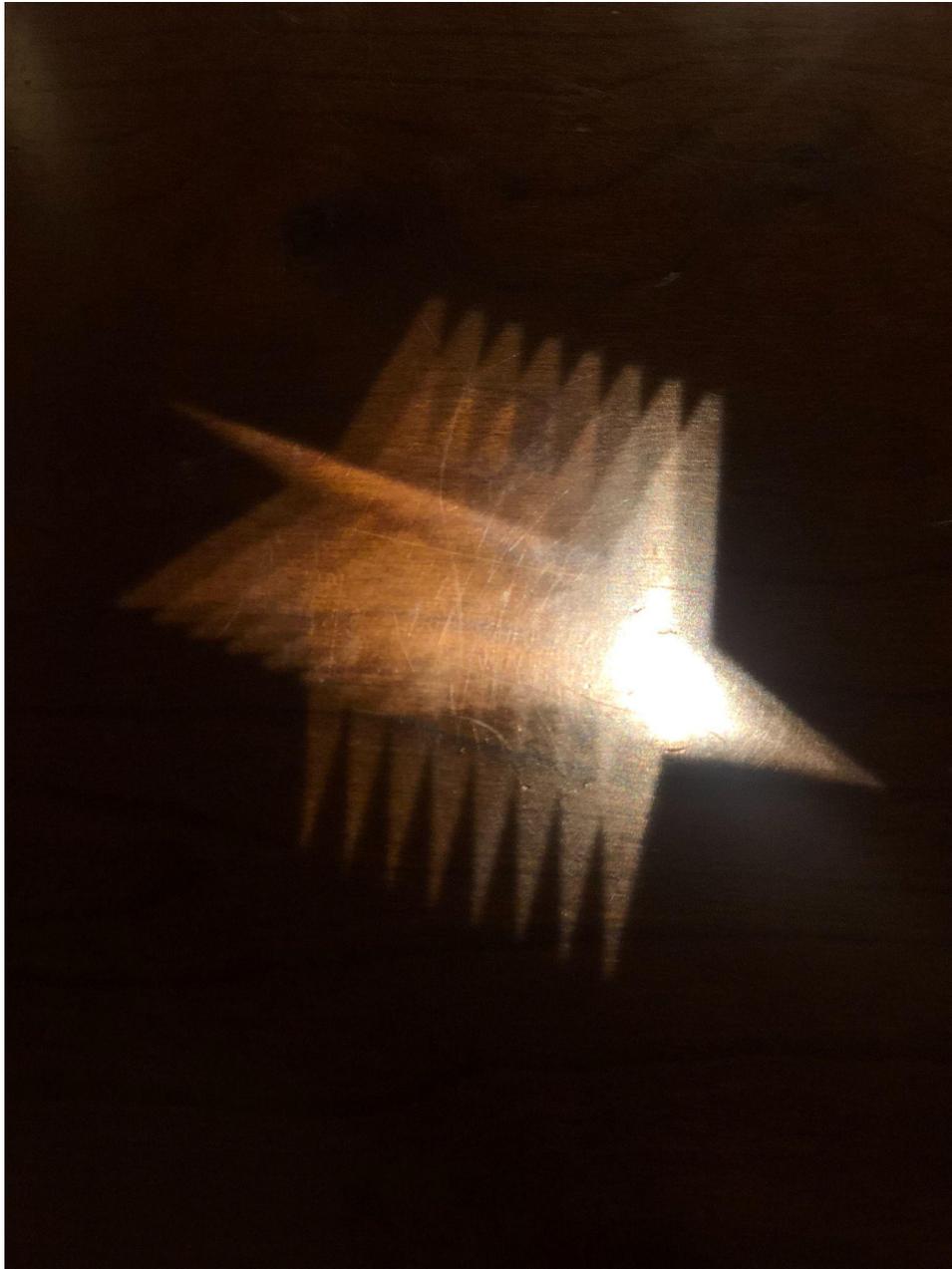


***National Avenue Christian Church
Online Worship Guide***



***Epiphany
9 January 2022***

The Gathering of a People of God

National Avenue is a brave place for all people. We celebrate our diversity of race, creed, religion, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions. We extend a warm welcome to all this morning, especially those who are worshipping at National Avenue for the first time. Your presence both enriches us and this time of celebration together~

As you gather for worship...

- *Bring a candle (and lighter) and communion elements (coffee, juice, bread, bagels, whatever you have!).*
- *During the Passing of the Peace you will be invited to wave and say hi in the comments!*
- *Before worship, you are invited to share your prayers here:
<https://forms.gle/G1V6Hh37pmiv5D5q7>*
- *Breathe and savor the Spirit gathering in this space.*

Welcome to Worship

Words of Gathering

Amy Danford

We come to this place—

each of us on our own path.

The path is winding,

and the path is not always clear,

and the path changes,

but we are here.

God is walking on this path with us.

What a gift it is

to not walk alone.

Let us join our heart, minds, and whole selves
as we gather to worship together.

[adaptsantifiedart]

*Gathering Hymn

Epiphany Carol

BEACH SPRING

Every Nation sees the glory of a star that pierced the night.

As we tell the wondrous story, we are bathed in radiant light.
Star sent forth from highest heaven, dancing light of God's design,
shine upon us on the gift that's given: Word of flesh now born in time.

Every tongue shall sing the praises of your birth in deepest night.
You are healing for the ages; you are Christ, our God's delight.
You proclaim within your being all our hopes, our great desires.
You shall live to rise, redeeming all who follow with their lives.

Once again may we discover Word made flesh sent from above.
In our neighbor, sister, brother, in the lonely and unloved.
May we touch you, may we hold you, may we cradle you with care
as we learn to love each other, bringing hope out of despair.

Gather, God, the world together in the brightness of your day.
Fill our hearts with joy forever: help us walk the holy way.
May your justice rule the nations; may all people live as one.
Now we see our true salvation in the glory of this One. [adapted/franciso'brien]

Epiphany Light

Aydia Lancaster

Holy God,
You speak to us in Scripture and in prayers,
in sunrises and sunsets,
in friends and in strangers,
in dreams and in songs.
You are speaking all the time,
and how often do we miss it?
Still our minds so that we can listen
with a depth that we have not heard before.
Still our hearts so that we can receive
with open arms what it is you are offering us today.
**We know you are speaking,
so we are listening.**

Gratefully we pray, amen.

The Christ Candle is lit.

As we celebrate Epiphany,
we celebrate that the light is here.

The light is here.

May it burn brightly in this space
and even brighter in our hearts.

Amen.

[adapt/santifiedart]

Passing of the Peace

Amy Danford

When hope invites us to journey elusively,
beckoning onward but never in our grasp:

**God of wisdom and promise
give us courage to travel on.**

When dreams glimmer in the distance, fading, clouded
and hidden or shining with new brightness:

**God of wisdom and promise
give us courage to travel on.**

When established patterns collapse into the uncertainty of the unknown
and security dissolves into a memory:

**God of wisdom and promise
give us courage to travel on.**

When the illusion of success threatens to divert us
and silence our souls' yearning:

**God of wisdom and promise
give us courage to travel on.**

When we think our journey has ended in the star-lit glow only to find

the end is a new beginning:
God of wisdom and promise
give us courage to travel on.

[adapt/janberry]

This morning, may the peace of God be with you.
And also with you.

As we share peace today, we invite you to share this ancient greeting with those gathered. Share a hello or peace sign in the chat!

Life of the Church

Rev. Jenn Simmons

Please let us know you are with us here by filling out this form. If you would like to receive our weekly update by email or would like to schedule a time for coffee with our pastor, please provide that information on the form.



Reading the Stories of our Tradition
from Matthew Chapter 2
from Luke Chapter 3

Confirmation of Baptism

Aydia Lancaster

Remembering this Invitation
Following the Way of Jesus

Church, will share your love, support,
and wisdom with Aydia?

We will.

Church, will you listen to her questions, support her visions, and give her your encouragement as she makes her way of love?

We will.

Together, we will walk the Way of Jesus.

**As we grow, learn, and evolve,
we commit to being a community of support, nurture
and love.**

We will walk with each other.

Blessing for the Journey

Louise Jackson

Prayers of the Community

*As this community,
we invite you to take a few moments to claim the Spirit,
wherever you are today. We invite you to light your candles as we share prayers
at the end of our silence. As we join in prayer, we invite you to share prayers
here <https://forms.gle/G1V6Hh37pmiv5D5q7>.*

Prayers of the community.

God of The Way,
we all have roads we travel.
We travel emotional roads—
the narratives we tell ourselves,
the mental places we revisit again and again,
the assumptions and the fears we know by heart.
Then there are physical roads—
the places in our lives that we walk every day, grocery stores and coffee stands,
subways and carpool lines.
And then there are roads of our society—
the paths carved out that we are expected to follow, dress and etiquette,
education and rules,
so many things unspoken, but built in stone all the same.

So today we remember the Magi—
who traveled, who knows how long, down a dusty road to get to you.
Holy God, we too want to be people that travel
mental, physical, and cultural roads to get to you.

We want to gather in your sanctuary.

We want to remember you in our prayers.

We want our hearts to see and claim the light that is already in our midst.

Help us get to that place, for we long to be journeying toward you.

In addition to the road the Magi traveled to you,

we also remember the road they took home—

a road home by another way.

So, God, when the world cries out for violence and vengeance,

show us that road—show us home by another way.

And when the world cries out in scarcity and fear,

show us that road—show us home by another way.

And when we find ourselves on a path that could hurt us,

show us that road—show us home by another way.

God we are walking.

This life is a journey.

Be in our steps,

that we might be led to you.

Be in our eyes,

that we might see you.

Be in our hearts,

that we might be brave enough to go home by another way.

May it be so.

Reflection

The Invitation

Rev. Simmons

Music of Response

When You Believe

LEVITT

SINGERS: RANDALL BECRAFT, JENNIFER FORNI,
PATRICK MCMULLON AND COURTNEY WRIGHT

Invitation to Offering

Thank you for being church and for all the ways you support one another!

To make a financial gift online visit: [here](#)

Music of Response

The Work of Christmas

FORREST

**SINGERS: RANDALL BECRAFT, JENNIFER FORNI,
PATRICK MCMULLON AND COURTNEY WRIGHT**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

John Mihalevich

Communion Meditation

Communion Hymn

I Am the Light of the World!

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Sharing at our Tables

As we gather at the table this morning,
we acknowledge the presence of God, our Eternal source of wisdom.
We are grateful this morning that the new year brings new light,
new hope, and, most of all, new questions.
Where God's light shines, possibility opens
a way, a word, a child, a gift.
We find paths where before there were only walls.
We hear the call of God's claim on our lives.
We remember a child born with a promise
that will transform hearts forever after.
We accept the gifts that have been given,
needing and receiving them over and over again.
What God brings to us in Epiphany is possibility,
a threshold that we can step over into wholeness.
What is revealed may not be what we expected
as surely as what the shepherds and the sages saw
was unexpected and puzzling.
But the revelation of God's word made flesh

is the answer to all of our deepest questions.
We give thanks to God for the unexpected,
for the light that opens us up, leads us on,
and keeps us always seeking after God's call on our lives.
And on this morning,
we give thanks for the opportunity
to share this meal together.
So today, in this sacred place, around our table,
we take this bread and we break it,
remembering that you are manna for our souls.
We also take this cup and pour it,
giving thanks that even now,
you surround us with your love.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Susan Mihalevich

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

During this time, you are invited to eat and drink. We are connected by the tables of our lives. Across distance, we are united by sharing together. Our presence, in person or across digital space, brings the Table to life.

Song of Blessing *Arise, Shine Out, Your Light Has Come*

THE GIFT OF LOVE

Arise, shine out, your light has come,
unfolding city of our dreams.
On distant hills a glory gleams:
the new creation has begun.

Above earth's valleys, thick with night,
high on your walls the dawn appears,
and history shall dry all its tears,
as nations stream towards your light.

From walls surpassing time and space
unnumbered gates, like open hands,
shall gather gifts from all the lands,
and welcome all the human race.

The sounds of violence shall cease
as dwellings of salvation rise
to sparkle in eternal skies
from avenues of praise and peace.

The dancing air shall glow with light,
and sun and moon give up their place,
when love shines out of every face,
our good, our glory, and delight.

Words of Sending

Let us go in faith to ponder in our hearts
the mystery and the wonder of this season...

The Christ Candle is extinguished

We have a calling in this world:
**we are called to honor diversity,
to respect differences with dignity,
and to challenge those who would forbid it.**

We are people of a wide path.

**Let us be wide in sharing the love, hope, peace, and joy
we have found, and are making,
in our journey together.**

[adpt/J.M.Rickard]

Postlude

Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor,
Rev. Michelle Scott-Huffman, Adjunct Pastor for Preaching
Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright, Adjunct Pastor for Faith Formation with Families
Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator,
Ashley Quinn, Justice Coordinator & Technical Director
Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator,
Stephanie Scott-Huffman, Director of Digital Ministry
Rev. Dr. John White, Pastoral Care, **Jonathan Raney**, Music Director